

Jasmine Gould

Interviewed by Barrie Cline and Setare Arashloo

Barrie: So we're just gonna jump right in.

Setare: We're ready to go.

Barrie: Cool. So we explained the project a little bit already. So I'm just gonna jump right in. If you could tell us your name and job title and where you live?

Jasmine Gould: Okay, my name is Jasmine Gould. I am an apprentice in the electrician's program for Local 3 Union. I live on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Barrie: And were you born there? Where is your [00:00:30] family from?

Jasmine Gould: I was actually born in Brooklyn. Most of my family is from Brooklyn and most of my family still resides in Brooklyn. I'm the only oddball in Manhattan, I guess. I've lived in the same apartment, minus college years, about 23 years now, in Manhattan. I did move away for college, but then I came back. And now I'm back in my home.

Setare: And where did you go to college?

Jasmine Gould: Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island. Very nice place. I went for business instead of culinary [00:01:00] like everyone else thinks I did.

Barrie: And so then you went to school for that, but how do you make the transition to wanting to become an electrician? How did that happen?

Jasmine Gould: Honestly, it happened out of boredom, to be honest with you. So basically, when I moved back to New York, I didn't have a job for the first two weeks I was here. I was trying to find things to do. So I looked around, and I randomly found this thing [00:01:30] about NEW, Non-traditional Employment for Women. It's a program for women. I just happened to call them, found out my cousin worked there, so I joined. And that was kind of how it happened. I joined, I completed the program, and I really did like it, but at the same time, to be honest I wasn't a believer. I didn't think I could really do this for a living, or that I even wanted to. So of course, I went back to my safety job of the office work and things like that. Hated that job. [00:02:00] Absolutely soul-sucking. So then when I was looking

for an out, here goes that opportunity again. The test was coming up for the electricians' union. I put in my two weeks notice, I took the test, and I started working. That was it. Wonderful happenstance, I guess.

Setare: And is your feeling towards your day at the job changed? Like, because of the pace of it, [00:02:30] because of it not being an office job, how did you feel about that transition?

Jasmine Gould: From office to ... I was excited. From the beginning ... Now, I still get excited. Especially when I go to a new site, it's like ... It's all new. I think the reason why I hated the office job was because it was the same thing every day. The same people, the same little petty dramas, the same everything, the same day. And when you go to the construction site, even if you're at one site every day, you don't necessarily see the same people [00:03:00] every day. If you don't want to see that person, you can go to the other side of the damn room and you don't have to see them. It's just different. Even if you're doing the same thing every day, somehow it's going to be different, whether it be the people around, the trades around you. Watching the whole process just come together and go into completion ... Something about it's just awesome to me. I don't know why, it just is. Just knowing that I helped make this ...

[00:03:30] I swear, before I got into construction, I wouldn't lift a finger to fix anything. I'm like, "I'm not doing that. Let the guys do it. I'm done." Now, I'm like, "Nah, I got this. Don't worry about it." But yeah, the transition was really difficult at first. I think it was more mental than anything, just knowing that I'm gonna get dirty every day. That was something. That was definitely something. But it was really nice.

Barrie: And what kinds of work are [00:04:00] you doing right now on your job site?

Jasmine Gould: It's all just reconstructive work for the shop I'm in. Basically, we go in after the demolition is done in the office. We just go in and fix everything brand new. So it's a relatively new office, but it's still an old building. So there's no new construction going on yet for my job. It's all good stuff.

Barrie: What is reconstruction work? When you say that, I don't understand what that is.

Jasmine Gould: Basically, we're just doing [00:04:30] things over. We just go on in and ... Remodeling, kind of, in a way, but I guess remodeling sounds a little less than what we're doing. Basically, what they go and do, if they're making a new office ... Say we're doing this office here, which you can't see on the recording, but you understand. Say we're doing this office, right? And another owner comes in, and they don't want this. They want something else. So someone will come in and

tear all this stuff out, and then we'll come and put something, whatever [00:05:00] you want for your specifications, in. So it looks like a brand new office. Does that make any sense?

Barrie: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jasmine Gould: Okay, thank you.

Barrie: Totally.

Jasmine Gould: I was trying there.

Setare: And do you remember the first day in your job?

Jasmine Gould: Yes. When I started in the field, period? Yes. September 15th, 2015. Oh my god, I walked in scared to death. I didn't know what to expect, I didn't know what to do. First of all, I didn't know where I [00:05:30] was going. It was just hard to find anything. Getting lost but meeting some wonderful people along the way was nice, and then trying to figure out who my foreman was out of all these men ... It was just nerve wracking. So nerve wracking. It really was, but I can adapt. So it didn't take very long for me to just be fine. Maybe two hours [00:06:00] or so, once I figured out what I was gonna be doing, got some placement, I was okay.

Barrie: And what were you doing?

Jasmine Gould: Oh, they basically, when you first come in, they'll connect you with a journeyman. That's one of the people that were there longer, I guess you would call them. They'll just tell you what they need you to do. So I was the assistant to the journeyman. I was helping him put up light fixtures, and it was really fun. Like I said, before this, I've never really touched anything. [00:06:30] Before the NEW program, I didn't touch any tools. After that, I didn't touch any tools or anything like that, so I'm like, "Oh my god, I'm gonna break in my nice, new, shiny pliers." It was just kind of nerve wracking. I didn't want to mess up anything. And they'll tell you, "You're an apprentice. Don't worry too much about it. Just try your best." But to me, it's like, "No. I need to have this perfect right now." But that didn't happen. It didn't happen.

Setare: What happened instead?

Jasmine Gould: It didn't happen. Certain things, you just don't get 'cause [00:07:00] it's like, "What are you talking about? What is this extra pieces? What are these things I need to do?" The simple things are fine, but when it comes to the complicated

wiring different things up, and it's like, "Yeah, this is my first day. I don't know what you're talking about. I have no idea what you're talking about." But you get it. Especially if you get a really good journeyman, and they'll teach you step by step what you need to do. You have some that are jerks, that are like, "Just do it." First day, I don't know what I'm doing, what are [00:07:30] you talking about? But my first journeyman was Shawn. Shawn James, that's his name. Wonderful man. And he just taught me so much stuff I still remember, surprisingly. Surprisingly, I still remember, but he was really just nice. I think if I'd have got someone else, I probably would have been a little more discouraged because some of them are just jerks. Sorry. I probably shouldn't say that, but they are, some of them. But you get a lot of them that are really good, that really want to teach you.

Barrie: What are some [00:08:00] of the skills that you think you've learned that you value most, in terms of ... What are some of the electrical skills that were some of your favorite, in your own repertoire?

Jasmine Gould: In my own? I think splicing. Why splicing? Just because a lot of people don't know how to do it right.

Setare: What is splicing?

Jasmine Gould: Basically when you're just doing the wires and you're connecting one wire to the next one. And it sounds very simple, but some reason, a lot of people can't do it correctly. When I first ... I had a journeywoman. Her [00:08:30] name was Colette. And she made me splice for like, two weeks straight, and it was like, "Oh my god, are you freaking kidding me?" She was like, "It's for your own good." But my hands were killing me, so it was like, "I don't think it's my own good, I think you're punishing me for something I didn't do." But she was right, because now, one, I'm very good at it. I'm fast at it. And then I do it right. Even my foreman's like, "Oh my god, you did such a good job." I'm like, "Yeah, that's right. Thank you, Colette!" But [00:09:00] yeah, I love the splicing part. It's cool. It gets things done. We keep the lights on.

Barrie: Were you ever scared to work with any particular tool or at a location?

Jasmine Gould: I got video for you, oh my god. Yes. The first time I ever used a sawzall, it's like an electronic saw, it just ... Jesus Christ. Where's my phone? I could show you. I was scared to death, oh my god. The journeyman ... I'll show you after if you want, 'cause it's gonna be loud.

Barrie: Yeah, I'd like to see it.

Jasmine Gould: The journeyman [00:09:30] was like, "Just do it. Just use it. It's okay." I'm like,

"I'm gonna cut my hand off! Oh my god, I'm gonna cut my hand off!" So it was just nerve wracking. I saw people do this many times, but it's different when you have to do it. It feels different. You think it's gonna feel one way, but you touch it, it's like, "Oh hell, what am I gonna do with this?" And I was just scared I was gonna cut my hand off. In my mind, I'm always gonna hurt myself.

Barrie: What was it used for, the sawzall?

Jasmine Gould: We were cutting pipes, and [00:10:00] the pipes were coming out of the ground, but they had to be a certain length, so I had to cut some of the pipe off. I was scared to death, I'm telling you. It's one thing if the pipe was rigid and something was holding it, but this was something I had to control myself and hold myself. And I was like, "Oh my god." That was my first time using this. I was scared to death. I really was. He was like, "Just do it!" You could hear it in the video.

Barrie: And how [00:10:30] are you now with it?

Jasmine Gould: I'm okay with it now. I'm a little more comfortable with it. I haven't had to use it for months, but I'm more comfortable with it, only because that initial fear is gone. I'm a little more confident with either my positioning or just the strength of it. I know how it is. It's not all new. It works. It's just when things are brand new, you're like, "Oh my god, I'm so gonna mess this up." Yeah.

Barrie: You have to conquer [00:11:00] a lot of fear.

Jasmine Gould: Yeah. Yeah. Yes, yes. That is one thing, and I am a fearful person sometimes. It's like, "Oh my god, I'm gonna mess it up. I'm gonna mess it up. I don't want to do it, nope. Mm-mm (negative). Nope." Like this new job I just got two days ago, they don't use ladders. They have to use this electronic lift thing. One, I don't drive a car, so it's kind of like driving a car a little bit, except with a joystick. So I'm like, "Dude, I don't want to drive this thing. [00:11:30] I'm gonna crash into everything." He's like, "Just do it." Okay, let's see what happens. And I didn't crash into anything. But it took me two days to be okay with it. It definitely did.

Barrie: So it sounds like there's a bit of a culture of learning, rather than just somebody else taking it out of your hands and saying, "I can do it faster."

Jasmine Gould: Yes. It has to be a culture of learning, because we are their pension, they said. So we need to learn this job. We need to learn how to do things ourselves, because if we don't, they can't be with us [00:12:00] all the time. They can't watch us all the time. They even grade us ... They submit grades for us, saying how we do in the field, things like that. They have an option where they can put that you need unusual amounts of supervision. I've never had that, thank god,

but I'm just saying, I've known people who do. And I would hate that. I would be devastated if I ever got that. And for me, it's like, just show me once, I'm good. If I need you to show me twice, okay, show me twice. But just show me, and I'll do it myself. I don't want you to do it for me.

At first, I was like, " [00:12:30] Man, I don't want to do any of this," but yeah, it becomes a point where you want to do it yourself. You want to learn it because you don't want someone to say, "Oh, she doesn't know what she's doing." Especially as a woman. Especially as a Black woman. It's like you have to carry your weight, you have to do what you have to do to make yourself valuable at the office. Office. I mean ... You know what I mean. So you have to make yourself valuable. As an apprentice, you'll always have a job, but at the same time, you don't want to be the dead weight. You don't. [00:13:00] You just don't. You just don't. You don't. I've known some apprentices, and they have bad names already, and they just started. It's like ... That's bad. That's really bad. That's awful. So for me, I just want to avoid any type of negativity associated with my name. It's not something I want to do.

Setare: Has your job, any part of your job, ever felt creative to you? Do you feel creative? [00:13:30] Or a feeling or authorship for the work you're doing?

Jasmine Gould: I think in a way, kind of everything we do. We have an outline of what we do, the parameters that we need to follow. But how you go about getting to that end goal is your prerogative, basically. We have codes that we have to follow, but at the same time, the style in which you do it is your prerogative. For example, when we put up the light fixtures, everyone has their own style of working. [00:14:00] Whether they do one thing first or the other thing first or things like that. And you have to figure out what works for you. What's your personal strengths, weaknesses, or anything like that, you have to figure out what works for you. So even when we're doing ... I don't know, cutting holes somewhere ... I don't know. Just anything we do, we have to basically put our minds to it and say, "This is how it's gonna work for me and how I can get this done to where I meet their expectations." So all of it's kind of authorship, [00:14:30] within range. 'Cause we can't just go off the reservation and do anything we want, but we still have some kind of opinions we can put in there.

Setare: Do you have a favorite tool?

Jasmine Gould: A favorite tool? A favorite tool ... No, I don't think I have a favorite tool. Not that I've thought of.

Barrie: Have you ever had one passed on to you, or one you passed on?

Jasmine Gould: I had one passed on to me. It was a tape measure, but it was from a [00:15:00]

guy with the same initials as me, so I don't know. He's a really good journeyman, so it was like, "Aw, that's just so sweet." I just kind of kept ... It was really just nice. And the initials were already on there, so I didn't have to put anything extra. Yeah, that was one thing that was passed on. Favorite tool, I don't think I have one. No, I don't.

Barrie: Can you tell us a little bit about what it means to you to be a union member?

Jasmine Gould: I [00:15:30] really, really like the fact that we have a strong backing. A union is only as strong as its active members, so we try to make sure that everyone is active in and of itself. So for me, it means that I need to be a part of something bigger than myself. I need to be a part of everything that's going on. Not everything. Within reason, of course. I need to be a part of what's going on. I feel like it's kind of a family kind of thing. I feel like it's a big family. You have [00:16:00] your good parts of the family, you have your bad parts of the family. It's just a real big family, with one common goal. It's just really nice.

I really never thought about a sisterhood as something being nice before I got here. I'm not gonna lie. I never joined a sorority in college because I'm like, "Uh, nope." But when I got here, the women alone were just ... I don't know, just together. We went to [00:16:30] the march in D.C. a few weeks ago. Just being there alone was like, "Okay, I know I'm part of the union, but now we're part of something even bigger." So it's just great. It's a really good feeling. It's kind of hard to describe. It's just something that has to be felt. It's just a really positive motivational thing. It's just really, really good, a really good feeling. Family feeling. Family. Good and bad.

Barrie: [00:17:00] That's what family is. Do you have a favorite Local 3 tradition?

Jasmine Gould: Here at Local 3? Hmm. Favorite Local 3 tradition ... I would say hazing the apprentices. It's minor stuff, nothing crazy like in college, but just minor stuff like, just tell them to go get a bucket full of steam or just small stuff, just messing with them. [00:17:30] And also the gatherings we have, the clubs that we have as well. They have different clubs. I usually take part in the Latimer club. they have different gatherings that they do, like parties and ... everything that brings people together.

Barrie: Will you tell us more about that club?

Jasmine Gould: Well, it's Lewis H. Latimer. Basically, for the most part, they are just a group of people who just celebrate themselves and celebrate the union and celebrate [00:18:00] just being. They get together and they have fun, and anything that goes on, they want to be a part of it. They want to make sure that you're a part of it. They're very inclusive. There are other clubs as well, like the Amber Light,

they're for the women. Same thing. Very inclusive. All these clubs that I've ever actually entertained, they're very inclusive. They make you feel very welcome. It's like a sub-part of the family, like your favorite cousins that you go see. It's [00:18:30] very nice. That's the word I'm gonna use, that's my word of the day: nice. It's very nice. It really is. It really, really is.

Setare: What's your best "on the job site" story? Something that always, like ... you remember.

Jasmine Gould: That I'm always gonna remember? Oh man. I was fixing an outlet. They give you something called a tick tester, and basically you can test and see if it has power or anything [00:19:00] like that. So when I was working on it, we tested it. I went to get something, I guess I wanted a plate cover 'cause it was an outlet, to get a plate cover. And when I came back ... I forgot, what was it? No, I was talking to the guy in the electrical closet. I'm like, "Everything is turned off?" He's like, "Yeah." So when I came back to go actually do it, apparently it was turned on, because when I sat down ... I guess one of the wires touched the other wire, and the thing blew up and knocked me off the bucket. And [00:19:30] it was just like, the adrenaline rush was just crazy. I was so scared. I was like, "Oh my god, what happened?" And everyone heard it and just ran to the room I was in. I was in the back room, so thank god someone heard it. But still, I didn't get hurt, but it scared the hell out of me. Oh my god, it was just crazy. And that was the guy with the same initials. He was in the closet. I told him he was trying to kill me.

Barrie: [00:20:00] He owed you more than a tool.

Jasmine Gould: I was like, "You tried to kill me!" He was like, "I didn't touch it!" Apparently, he said, I think the foreman went and turned something on and forgot to turn it off. I don't even know. But either way, I will never forget that. It blew me off the bucket I was sitting on. It was crazy. Oh my god.

Barrie: What are your personal aspirations as an electrician? Where do you want it to go?

Jasmine Gould: Well, in the end ... Not "end," but [00:20:30] you know, further on, I would really like to own my own shop. I think that would just be amazing, like a contracted shop. I don't know if I'd just stick to just electrical work. I think my shop would have different parts to it. Kind of a one-stop shop. Different types of unions coming together and just working together. That would be where I'd want to go. So to get there, I have a few steps of course. I'd probably be a foreman at some point, 'cause they have women [00:21:00] foremen now, so that's good. We're making some headway there.

What else? Yeah, I really want to own my own shop. For me, it's another reason



why I didn't really like the office work. It's just working for someone else. I don't mind it to an extent, but if there's no way to go up, there's no type of ... There's just nothing for me there. I don't want to be there. But here, another reason why I like construction is, you always have room for growth. Even though [00:21:30] technically you're stationed as an apprentice and they give you levels to your apprenticeship, that's fine. But at the same time, it's on that actual job site, you can be so much more especially if you know more. Even on my station, even though my union card says this, I know this. And I work with these people, so I know this and I could do this. And you can go to another job site and take what you know and be higher in the food chain. You know what I mean? It's so much room for growth that it's amazing. And it's never really boring. I say "really," [00:22:00] because you have your days.

Barrie: If there was anything you could change about your job, what would it be?

Jasmine Gould: The dust. Oh my god, the dust is just so dusty. The dust and the different smells. I have a really sensitive nose, and it's like ... The different smells from the steam fitters and the pipes and all types of just smells ... Oh god. I would certainly change that. That was the first thing that [00:22:30] came to mind.

Barrie: That's good.

Jasmine Gould: That's the first thing that came to mind, the smells. Oh god. And the dust. Smells and the dust. Is that petty? I feel like that's just a small thing, but to me it's just so big. It's like, oh god.

Setare: No, that's something that is constantly there.

Jasmine Gould: It is a constant problem! It's like, Jesus Christ, why?

Barrie: And what can you do about it?

Jasmine Gould: Nothing. [00:23:00] Okay, so, in New York City, they have all these type of laws and rules and regulations, right? So say if you work in a building that's this high, like two stories or more. It's really not that high, right? So it's probably gonna be all the buildings. If you work in those buildings, you can't really open a window, especially when there's a pedestrian sidewalk down there. So they don't let you open the windows. So how are we supposed to breathe? They have all these fans and stuff like that, and some places have built-in exhaust systems. [00:23:30] Some places. Some places don't. So it's like, what do you do? You can't do anything. You just kind of gotta deal with it. I mean, eventually, your body kind of gets used to it where it doesn't bother you as much, but at the same time, it's like ... When I get to 50, I'm gonna die. This stuff is just ridiculous.

But yeah, I don't know. There's nothing you can do. Just gotta deal with it. They have these safety precautions and stuff that they claim [00:24:00] are in place, but no it's not. No one comes and checks it. If you call someone, then some people get an attitude about it, but who cares? But they still don't do much about it, 'cause there's nothing you can do. The laws are you can't open a window. What are you gonna do? Nothing. Put on a fan. It's just blowing dust everywhere. I don't know if it's worse or what, but it's just blowing dust everywhere now. I don't know. But [00:24:30] it's cool.

Barrie: Do you feel like your work ever merges into your home life or personal life? Do you feel like your work inters on it or is part of it? Merges with your family and home life?

Jasmine Gould: Not necessarily. I've taken what I've learned from work, fixing stuff around the house I would have never done before. Never, ever, ever. Like my dog chewed off my cord [00:25:00] to my air conditioner, and I fixed it. And before, I'd have been like, "Oh damn, I gotta buy a new air conditioner." Now I'm like, "Nah, I got this. It's okay. It's okay." But for the most part, it's kind of separated. Nothing I do outside of here really has anything to do with Local 3. From any recreational activities I do or nothing, it never really has anything to do with it. I make it a point to separate it, only because it needs to be separated. [00:25:30] Mentally, I need to separate it. It gets kind of weird about the schedule though. Like, having to go to school and work. That's kind of intrusive on my personal life, 'cause I don't want to be there. I don't want to be there, but it's for the greater good and it's a part of the apprenticeship which I've chosen to complete, so I've gotta do it.

Setare: How do you think the school and experience at the job go with [00:26:00] each other? Do they help each other? Is there anything you would change if you were in charge of designing the education program? How do you feel about it?

Jasmine Gould: I don't think I'd want to be in charge. That's just too much responsibility. But as far as how I feel about it, I mean ... I guess between when I was ... For myself, I already have two degrees, so having to go to extra college on top of what I've already done is like, "Come on. Why? Why do I need this?" You know what I mean? [00:26:30] Why? How are any of these classes gonna actually help me? Now I get going to Electrical Theory, 'cause that's all the background stuff of what we actually have to do in the field. I get it. That's ... I get it. I'll happily take that, because it makes sense to me why we're going there. The other classes is like, "Why? I understand you want us to learn about the union, I understand you want us to learn about certain things, but you could send me an email for that. Why do I need to go to class for four years for this?" And they're like, they want [00:27:00] us to have degrees and stuff like that.

So I get it. We're the "educated union." There's a lot of quotations there, a lot of air quotes. We're the "educated union," I get it. And I get that we have a certain standing that we're supposed to uphold. I get it. And we are the cream of the crop. I get it. But I already have two degrees. This degree is not really gonna help me in the field, so why do I have to do this? [00:27:30] I don't want to. It's nice you're paying for it, okay, I get it, but to me, it shouldn't be a mandatory thing. I just don't believe it should. I just don't, if you have a degree already. If your whole point is for people to have a degree when they leave, okay, I have two. Why do I have to do it? Please tell me, why.

Barrie: So, I'm sorry, you're doing the 20 credit program?

Jasmine Gould: No, I'm doing ... The 20 credit program is 2 classes less than what I need to get a bachelor's degree. [00:28:00] Why not just get the degree? I feel like it's stupid not to ... It's two classes. I have to do the classes anyway. Might as well get the degree. But my point is, why do I have to do classes at all? From the beginning, why do I need the 20 credits? I have that. I have 124 credits already from other colleges, plus more from another college. Why do I need to do this? Please tell me. I don't even know. I do not know. That's the point.

Barrie: [00:28:30] Do you imagine your children or other family members, would you advise them or encourage them to become Local 3 members?

Jasmine Gould: I have. I don't have any kids, but I have encouraged some of my cousins to apply and take the test, because it's a really good opportunity that can lead you different places. Even if you decide you don't want to stay in the union, or you don't want to stay in the whole apprenticeship, or you don't want to stay in this field, period, [00:29:00] it's still a good experience. One, to network with people, to maybe just find out what you want to do. It's still an opportunity. Just take it and go with it, see what happens. You might find somebody else on a job site that does something that you do want to do. You figure that out, I don't know. My thing is, just take the opportunity when it comes. So I've advised them, just take the test, see what happens. I don't think anyone's listened to me yet, but ... They want me to [00:29:30] find all the information. I'm like, "Dude, Google it. I'm already in here. I don't have to do all that." But yeah, I've advised people. I would. I honestly and truly think it's a really good opportunity. I do.

Setare: Are you the first generation in your family that goes to training?

Jasmine Gould: Yes. For this trade, yes. My dad did welding a while ago. I think I was tig welding or something like that. Or some kind of welding, I don't know. Actually, you [00:30:00] know what, I don't know if he was in a union. I don't think he was. I think he was a non-union welder. I'm pretty sure he was non-union. But that's another story. That's another story. But I am a first generation in Local 3, yes.

No one believed that I was gonna do it.

Setare: Why not?

Jasmine Gould: 'Cause they were like, "You're gonna get dirty?" I'm like, "Yeah! Yes, I am." "You're gonna [00:30:30] break your nails?" "Yeah. Yes, I am." It was just like, when they were telling me, I'm like, "Oh, damn. Forgot all about that." I've never been really prissy necessarily, but at the same time, it was like, me and just the dirt ... I've never been a fan. So it was just a real surprise to my family when I said, "Oh, well, I'm gonna be in construction."

Barrie: Do you feel electricians are paid fairly, or overpaid, [00:31:00] or ... ?

Jasmine Gould: Not the apprentices. I mean, when you get your A card, yes. It's like a rite of passage. You've done all this extra work that a lot of other trades don't have to do. From the going to the school to the 5-year apprenticeship to everything else that we have to do that they don't have to do. I think they get paid the dues that they do. I think it's a good thing. I wouldn't mind a little extra, but as an apprentice now, it's like, I can't wait till I get there. [00:31:30] That would be really nice when it happens. They could pay us a little more though, I'm just saying. Pay us a little more. 'Cause it's a struggle to go from the pay cut that a lot of us take to go into apprenticeship. You have to really want this thing, because that pay cut is serious. Oh my god. I mean, that's depending on where you came from. A lot of us will be going in ... Some people go in right after high school. So [00:32:00] they don't really have regular jobs. They don't even know what other jobs pay, other job experience. They go right into the trade.

Barrie: How many, do you think?

Jasmine Gould: That go right into the trade?

Barrie: Yeah, straight through.

Jasmine Gould: I honestly don't know, but I've met a few.

Barrie: What does it feel like, just being on the job site, in terms of how many young people you see?

Jasmine Gould: It feels a little weird at first, because it's like, "Dude, how old are you?" I got this kid that I just walked here with, actually. Very nice young man, but he is so young. I'm like, " [00:32:30] Damn, I feel so old! I really started out late." I did technically start out late, because I didn't start straight from high school. I'm like, "My resume is like, ten pages long, dude. This is your first job. Or this is

your first real job. And you stepped right into your career. You saved yourself a lot of anxiety." Because going on, you don't know what you want to do. If you come straight into here, into a career, that's ... I wish I did that. I did. [00:33:00] I really did.

Barrie: What inspires you about being an electrician?

Jasmine Gould: That woman empowerment, to be honest. The first thing that comes to mind, woman empowerment. It's like I can do anything that anybody else could do, from office to home. I can do it myself. It gives me a sense of independence that I didn't have before. I was always on my own for certain things, but ... Lord, let me see a bug. [00:33:30] Let it be some heavy lifting, I'm like, "Listen. I'ma call a guy over today." And my mom even has the same thoughts like, "Just call a guy. Let them do it." I'm like, "No, I can do it myself." And also, I think it teaches me to think more. I told this to a young guy. I was like, "Listen. We're electricians. We use our brains instead of our brawn. At the end of the day, you could lift that heavy thing up by yourself. [00:34:00] But you could also get this pole, use it as a lever, and save yourself the headache." So it just teaches you to think more and problem solve, and everything like that. That translates over into your life, which is actually part of your other question that you had. So yeah, I guess it does. Something else that comes over to my life. I don't know. It's just nice. That's the word of the day. It's really, really nice.

Barrie: [00:34:30] Is there anything else that you wanted to say about the profession or anything that we missed, or a story, an idea?

Jasmine Gould: For women, or just in general?

Barrie: For women, for anything you want.

Jasmine Gould: Well for women, I would say it's just a really awesome career choice. I've had a multitude of jobs, mostly office work. But this is just different. It's different. The sisterhood [00:35:00] that you come into, just from being in the trade, it's just ... I don't think you could find it anywhere else. Not that I have much experience with sisterhood, I'm just saying I just don't think you could find it anywhere else. It's just a difference, just knowing that you are in this male-dominated field, just knowing that you have a lot to overcome and that you're gonna do it together. It builds a bond, an unspoken bond of who you are. [00:35:30] It becomes a lifestyle too. Not saying it's like a cult, 'cause that's what I was calling it before, but that sounds a little negative. But it becomes a lifestyle. Local 3 becomes a lifestyle.

At first, I was like, "No, I'm not gonna be involved like that." But you become involved. Whether you want to or not, it just happens. It just kind of happens.

You just get invited to certain things, or just being around certain people, you become friends with these people. Close friends. I've met some really, really cool women, men too. So [00:36:00] it just becomes a lifestyle in general. A lifestyle. It is a lifestyle that you just get into and you love. Love and hate, I guess. I don't know. But I love it. I haven't gotten to the hate part, I hope I don't. But I'm just saying, I've heard the stories. But it's just a lifestyle. I would recommend it. I certainly would. I definitely would. I definitely do, actually. I definitely would recommend it.

Setare: Do you think being a woman [00:36:30] in a trade would be more difficult than a man?

Jasmine Gould: It depends. It depends on what aspect, because certain things now, with women, it's a little easier. Like, we get different grants, we get different ... Not special treatment, necessarily, but it's different the way that we are approached as opposed to the way a man is approached. Like, a man is a dime a dozen. You're gonna find a man in the trade ... You can find any guy in trade. [00:37:00] He gets fired, he gets injured, he quits; another one right there. Same thing with women in a way, but at the same time, it's like they have more incentive to keep us. Does that sound bad? It kind of is, but it's the truth. It is what it is. They have more incentive to keep us. Even with contracts. Contracts is what keeps a woman, especially a woman of color 'cause we kill two birds with one stone because they'll get certain contracts because they have a woman either in charge or at least a woman on the payroll. They'll get certain contracts [00:37:30] just for that. So it's a little easier for us. A little bit. I will say that a lot of places will not take it easy on us because we're women. We get the same job as them, but it's up to us to be smarter and not hurt our bodies. But yeah, it gets a little easier, I would say. But I've never been a man, so I don't really know the difference.

Barrie: [00:38:00] These are great, but I actually just wanted to ask you just a little more to see if there's more ... You mentioned the bonds of sisterhood that you're feeling, often it's a result of being in a male-dominated trade, but I wondered if you could say a little bit more about how you said there was a lot of different ways to get involved, and I wondered if you could speak a little bit more about how the Amber Light or the group that they were in, [00:38:30] how you felt involved in it or the bonds that you felt with your other female workers.

Jasmine Gould: When I came in, the girls that I took the test with were from NEW, the program I went through. So I already knew them coming in. Not too much, we just took a prep class together, but I still knew them. So we kind of stuck together. That's what happened. We just stuck together. But as we all branched out a little bit, we still stuck together but as people started meeting new people, we'd bring them all in, into the group, into our original group. So [00:39:00] we just

branched out and learned different aspects of the jobs and aspects of the workings of Local 3. Like I said, they have different clubs.

Amber Light is supposedly for women, but ... I guess I've never seen men, so I guess it really is for women. But they invite us to different things, to teach us the ropes basically. They're basically like mentors to us. We even have a mentorship program from Local 3. [00:39:30] So they just take us under their wings like little brothers and sisters. And that's what they call us; little brothers and sisters, because we are. Everyone's brother, everyone's sister, that's what they call each other. That's fine, but you feel it after a while, it becomes genuine. You have this person who's really looking out for you. They're really trying to teach you this trade, because this is the lifestyle that you've chosen to be in. So they want to make sure that you use it to the best of your ability. [00:40:00] So it just becomes ... I just have to relate it back to family again. That's your older brother, teaching you how to be the adult next. Just following in their footsteps. I don't know. It's just an experience. It's an experience. Yeah.

Barrie: Thank you. Thanks so much.

Jasmine Gould: You are welcome.

Setare: Thank you so much!

Barrie: Great, you did great.

Setare: Yes, [00:40:30] wonderful.

Jasmine Gould: Okay, good.